



Early Intervention in Massachusetts is a statewide, integrated, developmental service available to families of children between birth and three years of age. Children may be eligible for EI if they have developmental difficulties due to identified disabilities, or if typical development is at risk due to certain birth or environmental circumstances.

EI provides family-centered services that facilitate the developmental progress of eligible children. EI helps children acquire the skills they will need to continue to grow into happy and healthy members of the community.



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What is Early Intervention (EI) ?



Who is eligible for EI?

Any Massachusetts child up to three years of age and his/her family may be eligible for EI services if the child:

- Is not reaching age-appropriate milestones in one or more areas of development.
- Is diagnosed with a physical, emotional, or cognitive condition that may result in a developmental delay.
- Is at risk for developmental delay due to various biological and/or environmental factors.

How can a child and family become involved with EI?

The process is simple. Anyone (a parent, doctor, care giver, teacher, or friend) can make a referral by calling 1-800-905-TIES and asking for a listing of certified Early Intervention Programs serving a particular city or town. Early Intervention services do not require a prescription. Referrals are made directly to a certified program.

What happens after a referral?

An EI team will conduct a developmental assessment with the child and family to determine eligibility. This assessment will focus on specific areas of child development, including areas related to cognitive, language, motor, social, emotional, behavioral, and self-help skills.

If the child is eligible, an Individualized Family Service Plan is written based on the individual needs of the child and family. EI begins working with the child and family within 45 days of referral.

Who provides EI services?

Services are provided by a professional and dedicated EI team, which includes the child's family. Depending on the child's needs, an EI team may also include an educator, physical therapist, speech-language pathologist, psychologist, occupational therapist, social worker, nurse, and other specialty service providers. The child's medical provider is considered a valuable member of this team.



Where and how are services provided?

An EI team serves the child and family in what are called "natural environments", for example, in family homes, childcare centers, community play groups, or libraries. Serving children in natural environments helps them to participate more easily in their everyday activities and with their peers.

Who pays for EI?

- There is an annual fee for some families based on family size and income.
- Families do not bear the cost of insurance co-payments and deductibles.
- The Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Medicaid, Massachusetts health insurance and health maintenance organizations (HMOs) pay for services.

What should I do next?

- Call the Central Directory for Early Intervention at 1-800-905-TIES or visit www.massfamilyties.org for a listing of certified Early Intervention Programs serving your city or town.
- Call and speak with a local EI program to make a referral.

